

The University of Chicago

THE EIGHTH-CENTURY
PROPHETS' IDEA OF HOLINESS

A PART OF A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED
TO THE FACULTY OF THE DIVINITY SCHOOL
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

1934

By
WALLACE IRVING WOLVERTON

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INTRODUCTION

The past sixty years have seen many studies on the idea of holiness in the Old Testament. The basic and to this day more or less definitive work was done by Baudissin in 1876.¹ It is important to review some of his conclusions because his study has so much affected later works. As applied to men and things, holiness means that which is "dedicated to the godhead"; in reference to God, $\omega\gamma$ describes him as separate from the earthly--"the one who dwells high above it." As employed in respect to an other-than-God, $\omega\gamma$ signifies a relationship and not a quality;² the negative "Moment" in the relationship being that it is taken out of association with similar things, the positive, that it belongs to Yahweh.³ Nothing is holy in and of itself.

The later studies depend very largely upon Baudissin's work, but with the growing interest in comparative religion new elements were introduced. W. Robertson Smith⁴ and Pere Lagrange were among the first to make comparisons with the Polynesian idea of taboo.⁵ Their studies were not, however, confined to a consideration of the root $\omega\gamma$ but rather, with general "Semitic" ideas of holiness.

Although the present writer is primarily interested in semantics in respect to the Hebrew $\omega\gamma$ the general consideration of primitive notions of holiness require some attention.

¹Wolf Wilhelm Grafen Baudissin, Studien zur semitischen Religionsgeschichte II (Leipzig: Fr. Wilhelm Grunow, 1876).

²Ibid., pp. 17 f. In 1899 Rud. Kittel in an article, "Heiligkeit Gottes im Alten Testament," Herzog's Realencyklopadie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche (3d ed.; Albert Hauck Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung), VII, 566-573, discusses the conclusions of Baudissin, and insists that holiness is more than a relationship. It signifies the result of the relationship--a quality.

³Baudissin, op. cit., p. 47.

⁴Lectures on the Religion of the Semites (new ed.; London: Adam and Charles Black, 1894).

⁵Le P. Marie-Joseph Lagrange, Études sur les Religions Sémitiques (Paris: Librairie Victor Lecoffre, 1905).

He has depended particularly upon the recent edition of Nathan Söderblom's Das Werden des Gottesglaubens.¹ That writer has shown that underlying most early ideas of holiness is the perception of a power or force (die Macht) capable of bringing either good or evil. The languages of primitive men have specific words to designate this power and the actions of men in dealing with it. It is customary, however, in speaking of holiness in the field of comparative religion to employ the Polynesian taboo and the Melanesian mana. This may not be altogether scientific because these words reflect the specialized beliefs of the South Sea Islanders but they at least signify that there is a certain generic relation between notions of holiness. The present writer would use these words in this guarded sense, and he is influenced, moreover, by the prevailing practice in studies of words dealing with the Old Testament idea.²

Fr. Pfister approached the problem more from the angle of philology as he dealt with the classical sources. His work presents a sort of philological check upon what had previously been done. He writes:

"The true essence of sanctification exists in the power which works in it. It does not need to be a personal god; many times it is an impersonal, wonderful, supernatural, daemon-like--so to speak--magical energy. The holy thing is in a certain measure filled with a fluid, which flows from it and which can be transferred by touch, somewhat like electric or magnetic energy."³

He did not deal with the Hebrew קדש.

It will be seen in the following pages that the prophets came to grips with a prevailing notion of the non-personal character of the קדש power. The present writer is disposed to speak of this as "the impersonal force" following the lead of

¹Published at Leipzig by J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1926.

²E.g., Anton Fridrichsen, "Hagios-Qados," Videnskapselskabet's Skrifter, II Hist.-Filos. Klasse, No. 3 (Christiana, in Kommission bte Jacob Dybwad); Ragnar Asting, Die Heiligkeit im Urchristentum (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1930); Jacob Singer, Taboo in Hebrew Scriptures (Chicago: Open Court Publishing Co., 1928); Franz J. Leenhardt, La Notion de Sainteté dans l'Ancien Testament (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1929).

³"Kultus," Pauly-Wissowa Real-Encyclopadie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft, new ed. by Wilhelm Kroll (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzgersche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1922), p. 2113.

Pfister and others.

A word needs to be said concerning the etymology of קדש. Baudissin reproduces the suggestions of Delitzsch and Fleischer, indicating the possibility of its derivation from a basic matrix, קד. The ground meaning of קדש means, "to cut," "to cut off," "to divide."¹ Although this etymology has been doubted there is much in its favor. One fact which would tend to substantiate it is the parallel use of כרס,² and the significant use of כרס in context with it.³ Pfister has shown, furthermore, that many words of the languages he considered carry this basic meaning of "separateness."⁴ Holiness would therefore indicate something as of a separate category which Otto in his study of the psychology of religion would describe as the "wholly other."⁵

The writer is quite conscious of the fact that the eighth century B.C. in Israel and Judah with which he is dealing cannot be construed to be a "primitive" period. By suggesting in the above brief fashion something of the primitive character of concepts of holiness he does not mean to infer that the Hebrews held an essentially savage belief. But much of the older thought adheres to the thinking of the later stage. It is with these vestigial elements that the prophets are at times quite concerned. This study is primarily concerned with their use of the root קדש and is only secondarily interested in "holy" institutions. It is an endeavor in semantics. The particular meaning of the word on the lips of the eighth century prophets is the concern here, and especially as it relates itself to their god-idea. It is not an original thought that these prophets transformed the idea of holiness. This has been often suggested. The thesis herein propounded offers a suggestion of how that transformation was effectuated.

The prophets of the eighth century not only criticized the religious institutions of their times but also penetrated deeper into the world-view upon which those institutions were built.

¹Op. cit., pp. 20 f.

²Lev. 20: 26; 10: 10; Ezek. 22: 26; Exod. 26: 33; Ezek. 42: 20, cf. the "holy walls" in Isa. 62: 9.

³Exod. 19: 12, 23; Ezek. 43: 12; 45: 1; Ps. 78: 54.

⁴"Heilig und Profan religionsgeschichtlich," in Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart, Handwörterbuch für Theologie und Religionswissenschaft (2d rev. ed.; Tübingen: F. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1928), pp. 1714-1719.

⁵Rudolph Otto, The Idea of the Holy, trans. John W. Harvey (London: Oxford University Press, 1925), pp. 27 f.

They described the world-view of the cult devotee as an essentially magical one. To speak of his "world-view," however, is not to credit the average Hebrew with systematic thinking. But the total implication of his behavior and practice is that there lurked in the recesses of his mind the shadowy concept of an impersonal force. The break-up of the culture pattern during this period belies the possibility of any orderliness of his mind in reference to this the greatest of all powers. His perception of it was at best quite fragmentary. The result was the folly and inanity which provoked such scathing words from the prophet. It was doubtless their shallow thinking upon the very basis of their actions which caused Hosea to remark time and again that it was lack of knowledge that caused them to stumble. The philosophic bent of the prophets impelled them to go to the very bottom of the matter. They found the whole substratum to be, not an impersonal force, chaotic in manifestation, but a unified dynamic energy, which they immediately called the Holy One, and which they equated with Yahweh. The manner in which they arrived at their conclusion is sketched in the following pages.¹

THE OATH

Holiness is a characteristic of the gods in practically all religions.² There is, therefore, nothing particularly gained in demonstrating that this also is the case in Hebrew culture. But there is a valuable distinction to be made between קדש and קדוּשָׁה as a description of Yahweh. The former is a substantive signifying a condition inhering chiefly in the material objects of the cult, while the latter refers more particularly to persons.³ קדוּשָׁה indicates the mana-taboo force as impersonal. קדוּשָׁה suggests more of its personal, δαίμων-like quality. It is, therefore, very significant when Amos says that Yahweh swears by his holiness (קדוּשָׁה).⁴ It is as if Yahweh himself had recourse

¹W. C. Graham, The Prophets and Israel's Culture (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934), chap. iv, discusses the prophetic world-view and shows that it is the heart of the prophets' philosophy of life.

²Nathan Söderblom, "Holiness, General and Primitive," in the Hastings' Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, VI, 731.

³Otto Procksch, in the Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, ed. Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1933), pp. 89 f.

⁴Amos 4: 2.

to the impersonal force in order to make his oath binding. Was the generalized concept of holiness a larger thought unity than the idea of God? There is reason to believe that Amos' contemporaries so practiced even if they had not given the matter rational consideration. Is Amos simply borrowing a cult expression in order that his hearers might understand, or did he share in such a thought? This is difficult to answer for the reason that the book of Amos presents so few occurrences of קִדְּשׁ . But it is probable that he had not reached the conceptual heights concerning the nature of deity that Isaiah attained when the latter gave currency to the term קִדְּשׁ שְׁרָאֵל .

Elsewhere in Amos' book are references to Yahweh's oaths taken by his שְׁרָאֵל ,¹ and the pride (יָאֵל) of Jacob,² whatever that may be. Outside Amos' prophecies are accounts of Yahweh swearing by his strong arm,³ and by his great name.⁴ One requirement of any oath is that the power adjured must be capable of compelling the person to abide by the oath. It must be regarded, therefore, as in some way greater in force than the one swearing.⁵ This fact was recognized by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (6: 13), who said that when God made a promise to Abraham he swore by himself because there was none greater by whom he might swear.⁶ Now the objects of adjuration noted above must either be regarded as of less power than the one swearing and thus violate the requirements of an oath, or there is something about them which is capable of compelling the swearer. It is likely that even in such oaths a higher force is brought into play.

Alfred Bertholet's study, Das Dynamistische im Alten Testament, has demonstrated the fact of the participation of various parts of the body in the impersonal force.⁷ This would seem to indicate that Yahweh's swearing by his strong arm presents not only an anthropomorphic notion of deity, but also suggests the possibility that he was capable of being held to his oath by some power dwelling in that member. At least the evidence shows that

¹Amos 6: 8.

²Amos 8: 7.

³Isa. 62: 8, זְרוֹעַ יְהוָה .

⁴Jer. 44: 26. Cf. Ps. 105: 1-3 where the name is קִדְּשׁ .

⁵In the oriental oath one swears by anything one fears (A. H. Godbey, The Lost Tribes a Myth [Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1930], p. 119).

⁶Cf. Gen. 22: 16.

⁷Alfred Bertholet, Das Dynamistische im Alten Testament (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1926).

the human or folk basis for this picture of deity portrays a belief in an unusual force adhering to the hand. Consider the Hebrew idiom, יְהוָה בְּיָדִי .¹ Brockelmann suggests that the יְהוָה in the phrase should be translated "god" or "spirit."² In this translation he is influenced by Tylor's ideas of animism as his discussion shows. The resultant rendering would be according to this theory, "The god of (my or their) hand makes it possible to--." It does not account for the possibility of a power of an impersonal quality in the hand. Bertholet, however, suggests that some "dynamistic" quality or power is alluded to.³ The anthropomorphic figure, therefore, of Yahweh's swearing by his strong arm points to the belief that a portion of the impersonal force was inherent in it. The writer is not prepared to argue the question of whether or not this figure is simply due to poetic license. The more important matter is that Yahweh was thought compelled to swear at all.

This leads to Yahweh's oath by his יָדִי . Dürr has recently shown that יָדִי originally meant the throat or larynx just as did the Akkadian napištu.⁴ Is it possible then that an oath by the יָדִי was also a swearing by a member of the body? This can hardly be the case in Amos' time for the יָדִי , as Dürr shows,⁵ developed into a non-material idea and finally into a spiritual one. But even as a non-material or spiritualized entity it had a dynamistic significance. Söderblom calls it "the life-giving force."⁶ The life force in it is demonstrated in the frequent oath, "As thy יָדִי liveth"! Yahweh's oath taken by his יָדִי may, therefore, have been an anthropomorphic figure of the deity adjuring a power resident in one of his parts. Whether it is a spiritual or material entity makes little difference. Again the picture may be due only to poetic freedom. But why should Yahweh swear?

The picture which seems to be presented by these expressions

¹Gen. 31: 29 and יְהוָה בְּיָדִי in Deut. 28: 32.

²C. Brockelmann, ZAW, XXVI (1906), 29-32.

³Op. cit., p. 42.

⁴Lor. Dürr, ZAW, XLIII (1925), 262-269. Rabbi Morris Gross has found a similar fact in the case of יָדִי or larynx. It possessed a magic power for blessing or cursing and was probably the source of יָדִי .

⁵Ibid., p. 269. Dürr notes a parallel development in אָרֶן or אֶפֶס , nose or nostrils, which in expressions like אֶפֶס אֶרֶן and אֶפֶס אֶרֶן came to have a spiritual quality.

⁶Das Werden des Gottesglaubens, p. 64.

is of a person being held to his word by the fear of that portion of the impersonal force conceived to be innate in one of his parts. But when Amos speaks of Yahweh swearing "by his holiness" it is not a partial or fragmentary quantity of that force which is brought into play. It is the totality of it represented by קִדְּשׁ that is adjured.

Amos held a personal conception of God. Holiness was not, however, personalized by him. It was a quality of Yahweh's nature. Amos did not suggest that קִדְּשׁ and Yahweh were in any sense equivalent. The impersonal nature of holiness seems to skirt the fringe of his thought when he has Yahweh swear by it. Such an idea may have clung to his terminology rather than have been an integral part of his own world view. He could not invent new words. He must depend upon the phrases of his day.

Another interesting phrase showing prophetic thought concerning holiness is Yahweh's "holy name." When "a man and his father go unto 'the maiden'" it is a profanation (חֲלָלָה) of קִדְּשׁוֹ.¹ As to the significance of the name it is not possible to go beyond Grether's exhaustive study, Name und Wort Gottes im Alten Testament.² He shows the name to be the personal essence of the bearer, a kind of second "I" which when in the possession of an enemy or careless person can bring great danger to its owner.³ Yahweh's name may be so employed by Namenzauberer. The third commandment is directed against such persons.⁴ The name of Yahweh was also employed in the cult for the securing of blessing.⁵ The visiting of the יְצִרָה may have had ostensibly the purpose of blessing or increasing the force of Yahweh's holy name.⁶ But Amos says that the actual result was the profanation or weakening of it. Is Amos speaking ironically? His teachings generally do not admit of any human manipulation of divine will or power. Here again it would seem that he employs the idiom of the cult with an ironical depreciation of the effectiveness of the prevailing

¹Amos 2: 7. The יְצִרָה may be the קִדְּשׁוֹ.

²Oscar Grether, Beihefte, ZAW (Giessen: Alfred Töpelmann, 1934), Vol. LXIV.

³Ibid., pp. 2 f.

⁴Ibid., p. 21.

⁵Ibid., pp. 19 f. Cf. Ps. 105: 3a and 4a: "Glory in his holy name. . . . Seek Yahweh and his strength"; and 103: 1: "Bless (בֵּרַךְ) Yahweh, oh my נַפְשִׁי, and all my inward parts (bless) his holy name." In Deut. 10: 8 it is the special function of the Levites to bless by means of (לְ) the name of Yahweh.

⁶Kittel, op. cit., p. 571, thinks it may have intended to honor Yahweh. See the use of לְיִצְרָאֵל.

pattern and a pointed suggestion as to how it defeated itself. In the prophet's mind the self-contradiction of the cult practice resulted from the fact that it failed to take into account that

קדוּשׁ was more than a non-moral concept; the element of righteousness was a necessary ingredient. Ritual accompanied by acts of unfairness, such as disregard for the right of a man to his own robe, was a mockery.¹

THE אֱלֹהִים AND THE קדוּשׁ

There is a noticeable absence of reference in Amos to the קדוּשׁ God per se. This may be due either to the fact that his mind had not taken this additional step or that he was pre-occupied with the social fruits of the cultus which he criticized. Hosea, his younger contemporary, has, however, definite things to say about the holy God.

The pattern of theology with which Hosea had to deal portrayed Yahweh as definitely anthropomorphic. There are many instances of such thought in Hosea's own teachings. Perhaps again it is the prophet under compulsion to use the accepted and understood terminology. But in 11: 9b Hosea appears to be struggling against the idea of God in man's image. Yahweh's wrath is not as unrelenting as man's, even though Ephraim had given him just cause for anger. "For I am אֱלֹהִים and not human (אִישׁ), holy (קדוּשׁ) in your midst. Therefore I will not come in wrath (בַּעַר). The

¹The holy name in Ezekiel and later writings is almost equivalent to fame or reputation. The transition is not difficult to trace. With the fall of Jerusalem, the destruction of the temple and the deportation of Yahweh's people his name was profaned and his power greatly diminished. His people are called אֱמִתֵּי קדוּשׁ in the Deuteronomic literature; Deut. 7: 6; 14: 2, 21; 26: 19; 28: 9--his קִדְּשׁוֹ, i.e. his treasure or possession, and thus the outward proof of his power. But Ezekiel was anxious for a restoration of Yahweh's former pre-eminence. This also became a concern of the political Zionists. The holy name was thus a symbol of the revival of Yahweh's weakened force and a restoration of his reputation. In this changed setting the profanation of his name was a diminishing of his honor. Cf. Leenhardt, *op. cit.*, pp. 102 f., on Ezek. 36: 20. Other passages which show Yahweh's holiness to be chiefly a matter of his honorable reputation for effectiveness are I Chron. 16: 10; II Chron. 7: 19 f.; Ps. 106: 47; Isa. 41: 20; 43: 3, 14; 45: 11; 60: 9; Ezek. 36: 20; 39: 7; 25-27. A restored Israel is necessary to the regaining of a lost reputation.

etymology of שׁוֹ is not within the province of this discussion. The writer is disposed, however, to agree with those who maintain that its basic meaning is "to be strong,"¹ or the designation of an object possessing an unusual power. For the most part it is used as an additional appellative for a deity, otherwise named, not usually standing by itself. In the passage under consideration it stands with שׁוֹ, describing in a particular fashion the character of Yahweh.

Possibly Hosea wishes to contrast the force possessed by man and the power of Yahweh. It is not, as it were, that both men and deity partake of an impersonal energy. There is a different quality in the might of God. Indeed, his is the only true holiness, because it possesses the quality of forgiving love;² his wrath will not come as a recompense for Ephraim's perfidy. The older mechanism which brought woe when the שׁוֹ power was wrongly handled does not work in this new conception of holiness. Even though that reflex of forces assumes the pattern of personality, that is, when the wrath of an offended god was the ruling thought, the expected reaction will not come. A new factor has entered which disturbs the inevitable working of the formula.

To Isaiah the only trustworthy power in the world is the שׁוֹ שׁוֹ. Might and strength whether in man or beast cannot compare to this force.

"Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help and are saved by horses, and rely on a chariot because it is great, and upon horsemen because they are strong, and do not look to the שׁוֹ שׁוֹ, and do not seek Yahweh. . . . But Egypt is human and not שׁוֹ, and their horses are flesh and not spirit."³

The strength of horses is more than figurative, and is not to be confused with modern ideas of "horse power." The horse has figured large in primitive mythology, and was often times treated as a sacred animal.⁴ In Zechariah 14: 20 the bells on the horses

¹Cf. Gesenius-Buhl, seventeenth edition, and particularly the earlier editions which present a fuller discussion of this etymology.

²Procksch, op. cit., p. 92.

³Isa. 31: 1, 3. Cf. Isa. 30: 15 f.; Ps. 33: 16, 17, 21 for a similar idea.

⁴Dedicated to the sun in II Kings 23: 11. Söderblom notes the Swedish folk belief that a tired horse has been deprived of his power by the evil contrivance of a malevolent person (Das Werden des Gottesglaubens, p. 26). Bertholet reproduces Söderblom's

have an inscription to indicate that they are **קִנְיָן לַיהוָה**. The passage is late and shows the horse, for long an outsider, finally being embraced by Hebrew culture. Yahweh's might had in the past triumphed over the power of the horse. In the song of Miriam and Moses, Yahweh, "glorious in holiness" throws the horse and rider into the sea.¹ In a similar way Isaiah emphasizes the force of the **קִנְיָן שְׂרָאָה**. He contrasts the **אָל**-force of horses and horsemen with that of Yahweh. The contrast would have no meaning to his hearers if to them it had always been sharply defined. To them the animal strength of the horse was something great and mysterious. He too had somewhat of the impersonal force.

Although Hosea would contrast man and the **קִנְיָן** God in respect to forgiving love, Isaiah employs an anthropomorphic figure as descriptive of Yahweh when he likens him to an **אֱלֹהֵי גִבּוֹר**.

"The remnant of Israel and the escaped of the house of Jacob shall never again lean upon him that smote him, but shall lean upon Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel in truth. A remnant shall return, a remnant of Jacob unto the **אֱלֹהֵי גִבּוֹר**."²

This again emphasizes the idea of a more reliable force or power in **אָל**³ as well as in **קִנְיָן**. Yahweh's might is often represented by the figure of the **גִּבּוֹר**. This recalls the parallel between **גִּבּוֹרִים** and **חֲזָקוֹתָיו** in Isa. 13: 3.⁴ Yahweh's holiness, his **אָל** power, is, therefore, of the same pattern as that of the warrior. Like the warrior he increases his strength, apparently by recourse to the impersonal force. But for Isaiah this dynamic energy does not exist as something outside of Yahweh. He is the impersonal force. Isaiah expressly calls him **הָאֱלֹהִים הַקָּדוֹשׁ**,⁵ and champions the name **קִנְיָן שְׂרָאָה** as a proper characterization.

As an **אָל** Yahweh must be able to do either good or evil. He must be considered as either a taboo or a mana power. Every **אָל** must be either a source of **טוֹב** or **רָע**.⁶ This does not mean that the Hebrews had worked out a systematic dualism, positing two

example to illustrate the nature of dynamism in Das Dynamistische im Alten Testament, p. 5.

¹Exod. 15: 1-16.

²Isa. 10: 20 f.

³Bertholet, op. cit., p. 42, says that a strong dynamistic concept of God is found in the word **אָל**.

⁴In Isa. 42: 13 "Yahweh goes forth as a **גִּבּוֹר**, as a man of war he arouses (**רָעַר**) his zeal." **רָעַר** signifies the arousing of emotions in the sanctifying of war.

⁵Isa. 5: 16.

⁶Isa. 41: 23.

orders of gods.¹ But in the old pattern of the nature religions there was a strong tendency in this direction. This has come to light more recently in the Ras Shamra tablets which set Mot, the god of death and Alein Baal, the god of life in dramatic opposition. Perhaps it is due to the prophets that the tendency in this direction was in large measure checked.² Hosea particularly struggled against the drift of the times. He insisted that Yahweh was bringer of both good and evil, not a glorified Baal, whose mana-fertility power had no relation whatever, to righteousness. Isaiah's people tend to the old baalistic conception, hence the prophet's words:

"Yet he is also wise and will bring וְיָ

And will not retract his words."³

The prophets of this period generally protest against the milk-and-honey notion of Yahweh. They insist that he is also capable of doing evil.⁴

Isaiah's teaching of this truth met an interesting rejoinder:

"Let him hurry, let him hasten his work that we may see!

Let the plan of the קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל draw near and come that we may know it!"⁴

Opponents of the prophet doubted the power of his God. They were particularly skeptical about the conception of God expressed in קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל. On one occasion they showed clearly that they were tired of Isaiah's characterization for deity: "Give us a rest from the קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל!"⁵ But because they thus spurned the

¹G. van der Leeuw, Archiv für Religionswissenschaft, XXIX (1931), 98.

²S. H. Hooke has edited a significant collection of studies, Myth and Ritual (London: Oxford University Press, H. Milford, 1933), which demonstrate the prevalence of this pattern in Canaan. The prophets understood the reasons for this disintegration. Their criticism of the prevailing order is analyzed by W. C. Graham, The Prophets and Israel's Culture.

³Isa. 31: 2.

⁴Amos 3: 6; 9: 4. In the later period the idea is established. Cf. Isa. 45: 7 וְיָ and וְיָ. But Zephaniah must argue against those who have discredited Yahweh completely, who say he does neither וְיָ nor וְיָ (1: 12). Cf. W. C. Graham on וְיָ and וְיָ in AJSL, Vol. L (1934), No. 4, p. 209.

⁵Isa. 5: 19.

⁶Isa. 30: 11 הַשְׁכֵּתִי כְּפִי וְלֹא אֶתֶן. The translation is interpretive of the words in context.

Holy One of Israel all nature reflected the curse,¹ and the works of men were affected.² The prophet cries: "Why will you still be smitten?"³ He supplies the answer himself. They do not know the difference between לַיִשׁ and לֵךְ, darkness and light, or bitter and sweet.⁴ They would be unable to distinguish "evil" when it came, so confused in their understanding.

From this it is not to be concluded that the prophets hold the old idea of the wrath of God as bursting forth upon man because of an unwitting offence. Holiness is conditioned by a divine will to be sure, but does not proceed from a capricious nature. Yahweh's holy being is tempered by love as seen in Hosea's teaching. It is also conditioned by righteousness and judgment.

"But Yahweh Seva'oth shall be great in כְּשֶׁפֶט

And the קִדּוֹשׁ הָאֱלֹהִים shall be holy in זִדְקָה."⁵

Any who attempt to constrain the essential quality of his nature, e.g., the workers of magic (פְּעִלֵי אֲוֵן) will suffer punishment from the קִדּוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל.⁴ קִדּוֹשׁ as applied to God is in the mind of the prophet no longer a non-moral concept. It is not to be manipulated by a technique, and it certainly is not the right of anyone to use it for evil purpose. Anyone who attempts to do so will be broken and destroyed. Such a person who disregards or fails to understand the totality represented by קִדּוֹשׁ = Yahweh, and treats a personal reality as if it were impersonal must suffer in the end. He will break himself upon cosmic laws of personal values.

Isaiah 8: 12-15 requires special consideration.⁷

"You shall not say 'Alliance'! to all which this people speaks of as alliance,

And its fear you shall neither fear (יִרָא)

nor dread (לֹא יִרְדָּא),

¹Isa. 1: 2-4.

²Isa. 30: 13.

³Isa. 1: 5.

⁴Isa. 5: 20.

⁵Isa. 5: 16.

⁶Isa. 31: 2. Cf. Sigmund Mowinckel, Psalmenstudien I and II (Christiana: Jacob Dybwad, 1921), pp. 1 ff.

⁷The writer is especially indebted to Prof. W. C. Graham for the interpretation of this passage. The interpretation herein presented has long been held by him. It was his suggestions concerning the impersonal quality of the figures used which has made possible much of this study. Cf. his article, "Isaiah's Part in the Syro-Ephraimitic Crisis," AJSL, L (1934), 201-216.

Yahweh Seva'oth, him you shall regard holy
And he shall be your fear and your dread."¹

The parallelism suggests that fear and dread are parts of the feeling experienced in the presence of the object of holy quality.² וְהָיָה יְהוָה here means to posit, or set something off as worthy of awe or reverence.³ Isaiah thus reproaches the people for investing other entities with a holy dread when Yahweh alone is worthy of such an attitude. But there was some excuse for the people's fear. The whole history of the time indicates a badly shaken social and political structure. Yahweh's adequacy for the situation had undergone severe test. Many had abandoned all hope in his ability to save Judah from troublesome neighbors to the north. The political leaders in particular had begun to trust in alliances.

Does the prophet advocate the old dread of the קֹדֶשׁ power of Yahweh which ruled in such instances as the theophany at Sinai when it was thought that it would break out (פָּרַץ) upon them unless they immunized (הִתְנַחֵם) themselves,⁴ or as when Uzzah was struck dead for touching the holy ark?⁵ Tantaene animis caelesibus irae? Isaiah held no such idea. But it was necessary to reinstate Yahweh's effectiveness as an avenging god to a people who had either softened down this part of his nature or had depreciated his power generally.⁶

The word יִרָא, "to dread," has a stronger sense than יָרָא,

¹Isa. 8: 12 f. There is no good reason for amending the text by changing וְהָיָה יְהוָה to וְהָיָה יְהוָה. The people were in dread of a collision of forces between Syria and Samaria in 7: 1, 2. Such alignments of forces were also conceived as having their accompaniment in conspiracies among the gods. The cause of fear was thus more than a political maneuver.

²Baudissin, op. cit., pp. 56 f., notes that the Hifil has a meaning opposite to וְהָיָה יְהוָה and וְהָיָה יְהוָה "to reject." Here it would have the meaning, to regard as significant, to mark off in the mind as a matter of real consequence.

³J. M. P. Smith emphasizes the fearful or dangerous element in experiences of the holy (Origin and History of Hebrew Law [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1931], p. 91).

⁴Exod. 19: 21-24. Cf. Fridrichsen, op. cit., p. 12, for other expressions describing the activity of the holy power.

⁵II Sam. 6: 7.

⁶Cf. II Kings 16 for the manner in which Ahaz resorted to magical practices in a time of extremity, and apparently relegated Yahweh to a place of secondary importance in the cult.

"to fear."¹ It carries the moment of awe or aversion so characteristic of the "holy" experience. In Isaiah 29: 23 this coloring of the word clearly emerges:

"But when he sees his (Jacob's) children, the work of my hands in the midst of him, they (his children) shall validate as holy (קֹדֶשׁוֹ) his name, yea they will validate as holy the Holy one of Jacob, and they will dread (יִצְרֹ) the God of Israel."

This manifest relation between יִצְרֹ and יָעַר draws attention to the latter. יָעַר or "dreadful one" in verse 20 preceding the above passage is related to the שֹׁכֵן יָעַר, which Mowinckel believes to be a term for the sorcerer.² These latter cause others to sin by a קִבּוֹר, which is evidently a reference to some magical practice. The יָעַר is also coupled with the שָׂרָף or "scoffer,"³ probable the same as the one who points the evil finger or hand,³ and who is also described by the act קִבּוֹר יָעַר,⁴ and called the מַעֲשֵׂה יָעַר.⁵ These parallels indicate that the verb יָעַר signified more than an ordinary fear. It was a fear of the evil workings of the impersonal force in the hands of persons of malevolent influence. Therefore, in Isaiah 29: 23 "they will dread" and "they will regard as holy" describe the emotional reaction to this force as it is found in the Holy One. So when Isaiah says Yahweh shall be "your dread," מַעֲרֹצְךָ, he indicates the totality of the dreadful phase of the impersonal power which he says is now to be included in the deity's nature. This is as much as to say

¹It is related to פָּחַד a strong word for fear of Yahweh in Isaiah 2: 19, 21. Contra, Bernard Bamberger, "Fear and Love of God in the Old Testament," Hebrew Union College Annual (Cincinnati, Ohio, 1919), VI, 39-55, whose study of פָּחַד is inclined to minimize the fear element in regard to Yahweh. Also Lagrange, op. cit., pp. 153 f., is strong in denying that holiness was derived from a magic terror or an irrational taboo. But the total context of many passages will not allow such a conclusion.

²Psalmstudien, I, 20. The verb יָעַר is descriptive of the action of מַעֲשֵׂה יָעַר וְשֹׁכֵן יָעַר, "sorceries" in Isaiah 47: 12. Cf. also Isa. 11: 4; 13: 11; Ps. 37: 35; Job. 27: 13, and Jer. 15: 21, for parallels with the מַעֲשֵׂה יָעַר and the שֹׁכֵן יָעַר. Later passages equate the יָעַר with the קִבּוֹר, Ezek. 32: 12; Jer. 20: 11; Isa. 49: 25. Mowinckel further notes that the LXX uses οὐρανοκτονοί for both מַעֲשֵׂה יָעַר and שֹׁכֵן יָעַר, "Zwei Beobachtungen zur Deutung der מַעֲשֵׂה יָעַר," ZAW, XI (1891), 260 ff.

³Hos. 7: 5.

⁴Isa. 58: 9.

⁵Isa. 59: 4, 6.

that Yahweh is the source of evil. Many felt him to be only responsible for good. But according to Isaiah, both are phases of his nature as the Holy One of Israel.

In order to express unified thought the prophet was compelled to use fragmentary figures of speech. He had to use the vocabulary of his listeners, which was quite lacking in terms capable of expressing the amplitude of his idea. Any disintegrating culture is characterized by the fragmentariness of its patterns. Parts of the old and parts of the new are usually combined with confusing effect. Eighth century Israel and Judah were so distraught that a unified system was well nigh impossible. So Isaiah borrows pieces of their patch-work of thought in a very clever manner to achieve a single concept which might be understood by his hearers:

"And he (Yahweh) shall be for a מִקְדָּשׁ , and for a plague stone (אֶבֶן יִגְדָּל) and for a stumbling stone (אֶבֶן סִבְכָּה) to the two houses of Israel--for a snare (מַכְרָה) and a 'trap' (מִלְכָּד) to the inhabitants of Jerusalem."¹

These are certainly unusual symbols by which to characterize deity. How strange to call Yahweh a מִקְדָּשׁ , or a plague stone, or a stone of stumbling, or a snare, or a trap! But they are more than mere figures of speech, which one may attribute to poetic license. Each has a significance well understood by those whose thinking patterned itself through cultus symbols. But for Isaiah they are in the nature of idiograms representing the totality included in אֵלֹהִים and יְהוָה of the previous verses. The prophet is hampered by the scarcity of abstract terms to express his inclusive idea. He must, furthermore, employ these figures because they are pregnant with meaning for those whom he addresses. Because of the evident relationship of these objects to the מִקְדָּשׁ , it is necessary to examine the part played by each in Israel's and Judah's thought.

"Yahweh shall be for a מִקְדָּשׁ and for an אֶבֶן יִגְדָּל ." The significance of the first term has already been discussed. The second is brought under consideration here. יִגְדָּל is from גָּדַל "to strike" and signifies, along with מַכְרָה a "stroke," often times a plague. The word is used frequently in a way which indicates its "evil" significance.² The deity was frequently the

¹ Isa. 8: 14.

² A thing to be feared (מִדָּבָר and מִדָּבָר) in Prov. 2: 23 ff.; can be prevented by magical rites, I Sam. 6: 4; II Sam. 24: 21, or by the presence of holy persons, Num. 8: 19 (cf. the prevention of the דָּבָר , a similar idea in Num. 18: 5); can be brought by

bringer of the קֶלֶל . But sometimes Yahweh was regarded as protecting his people from it.

"There shall no evil befall you, neither shall any plague (קֶלֶל)¹ come near to your tent. . . . They (his angels) shall bear you up in their hands to keep you from dashing (קֶלֶל) your foot against an אֶבֶן ."²

From this passage it might be inferred that the אֶבֶן was a sort of cult object of taboo significance, perhaps a stone, somehow, associated with the plague. Mowinckel suggests that it is a taboo stone, possibly the altar made by Asa in his pro-Assyrian activities, or even a political stele.³ This is scarcely probable in view of the other figures associated with it, e.g. the snare and the trap. But it doubtless had some technical function in the cult.

The צִינֹר מַכְשׁוֹל is also likely a cult object. In Ezekiel the עֵינַי מַכְשׁוֹל is paired with לֵלִי in a way that suggests some material thing of the same import.⁴ The evil nature of the מַכְשׁוֹל is clearly shown in Levit. 19: 14: "You shall not curse the deaf, and you shall not place a מַכְשׁוֹל before the blind man." It is particularly reprehensible to take advantage of the deaf in this way because he has no chance of protecting himself and forefend the evil consequences of the curse by a blessing.⁵ The blind man's plight is of a similar nature. He will fall because he has no way of avoiding the mischief done him; he has no recourse to apotropaic magic.

Yahweh is also frequently responsible for the מַכְשׁוֹל ,⁶

adjuration, I Sam. 26: 10; or as the result of pagan practices, Exod. 32: 35; cp. Judg. 8: 27, and Josh. 22: 14 (in which case Yahweh is its source, as also in Exodus 7: 27; 12: 13, 23; II Sam. 12: 15; II Chron. 21: 18 et al); or because of violation of established mores, II Sam. 24: 21, *25, cp. Exod. 30: 12.

¹ קֶלֶל is one of the regular means of transferring the taboo element in the $\text{לֵקַח$ object, as already noted. קֶלֶל often means plague, Exod. 11: 1; I Kings 8: 37; Ps. 38: 2, where it is associated with שָׁחַת .

²Ps. 91: 10, 12.

³Sigmund Mowinckel, Profeten Jesaja (Oslo: H. Aschehoug, 1925), pp. 30 f.

⁴Ezek. 10: 3, 4, 7; 44: 12.

⁵Cf. Jud. 17: 1 f. The Arab prostrates himself to allow a curse to go over his head.

⁶Ezek. 3: 20; 21: 20; Jer. 6: 21.

but in Isaiah 57: 14 the Holy One would have it lifted out of the way of his people. Much of this is figurative no doubt, but cult object or not, the **חֲסִידֵי** aids Isaiah to describe the evil forces which are to be included in his idea of the **קִרְיָא**.

The **חֲסִידֵי** and the **חֲסִידֵי** of 14b also have a certain technical meaning. They may be treated together, because generally they are synonymous terms.¹ Sometimes they represent part of the technique of the **פְּעֻלַּת הַיָּד**: "Keep me from the hands of the **חֲסִידֵי** which they have set for me, and from the **חֲסִידֵי** of the **פְּעֻלַּת הַיָּד**."² They are regarded as evil³ and fearful⁴ and are laid by the evil word of the **פְּעֻלַּת הַיָּד**.⁵ This recalls the **חֲסִידֵי** of Isaiah 29: 20, who employ the **חֲסִידֵי** for evil purposes. The **חֲסִידֵי** and the **חֲסִידֵי** are thus often the means by which the magic power may be moulded for an evil purpose. They were feared because of their taboo nature.

All of the impersonal figures which are coupled with **חֲסִידֵי** in this passage evidence a certain magic power. The whole list would seem to be assembled by the prophet for the purpose of emphasizing the notion of the destructive aspect of the impersonal force which is, so to speak, caught up in Yahweh's nature. Isaiah makes God the total cause of evil, a courageous thought as any theologian knows.

The way in which **חֲסִידֵי** stands in this series of misfortune-bringing objects clearly demonstrates its potentiality for evil. Therefore, it would be advisable in translations of this passage to supplant "sanctuary" by "taboo place." An Arab proverb illustrates the dreadful nature of the sacred place: "He who goes around the hima will end by falling there."⁶

Such is the way in which Isaiah throws into relief the impersonal force in its worst manifestations. The "evil" so described was not in the prophet's mind the outbreaking of the power because of some failure in magical control. It was Yahweh manifesting himself in nature and in the affairs of men. The totality of good and evil have been absorbed in his being. Isaiah thus personalizes what had been conceived as an impersonal force.

The more intimate and personal reaction of the prophet to the changed concept is found in his call to prophecy in Isaiah 6:

¹ Josh. 23: 13; Ps. 69: 23; 140: 6; 141: 9; Amos 3: 5.

² Ps. 141: 9. Cf. also Ps. 64: 6.

³ Prov. 12: 13; Ps. 119: 110; the work of the

⁴ Associated with **חֲסִידֵי**, Jer. 48: 43; Job 22: 10; Isa. 24: 17b; with **חֲסִידֵי**, Prov. 29: 25.

⁵ Ps. 64: 6.

⁶ Lagrange, op. cit., p. 186, note.

i-13. This dramatic experience has been so much discussed and commented upon that the writer hesitates to suggest anything further. Until very recently the philosophic implications of the incident had not been drawn.¹ Isaiah was confronted with the now personalized force. Lacking the weighty words of philosophy, if indeed he would have deigned to use them for such an overwhelming realization, he simply gave account of his vision. It was a characteristic of prophetic thought that burn at the edges with the ecstatic fire. This need not blind perception. Indeed in this enkindled state, in this furor poeticus, the prophet, if he by nature were given to face facts, became acquainted with realities which escaped the prosaic mind.² The word used for the description of the great reality which was thus objective to his consciousness is שִׁיבֹה, and must be thrice repeated to render poetic justice to its power. The word itself, however, indicates somewhat of a personal moment in contrast to the more non-personal שִׁיבֹה. Yahweh Sevaoth is equal to this concept of power or might. And in the face of it Isaiah feels himself undone (דָּחַה), much like others who had formerly been confronted by it.³ But there is an additional element in his experience. He is faced by his own moral unworthiness. He is a man of unclean lips dwelling among a people of unclean lips. But the שִׁיבֹה God is capable of removing this. One of the seraphs takes a live coal from off the holy altar and touches (יָשָׁה) his lips. This act of touching did not render the person taboo as usually conceived. It purified from moral uncleanness. This was no mere ceremonial cleansing by means of a holy medium as practiced in the cult. It was restorative of moral fitness. It shows the Holy God to be himself of a moral nature, capable of banishing man's sin.

Isaiah, furthermore, was awakened to a sense of the immanence of the שִׁיבֹה. "All the world is filled with his שִׁיבֹה." Coming from the root שָׁבַח whose basic meaning is "to be heavy," שִׁיבֹה is thus a quality inhering in material things. Perhaps it might be rendered in philosophic terminology by "substance." Not long after this, the cosmological thinkers of Greece and Ionia were to debate the question of the ultimate construction of matter.

¹Cf. Graham, The Prophets and Israel's Culture, ad loc.

²Cf. the writer's dissertation, "Amos as a Thinker" (Unpublished Master's thesis, Department of Old Testament Literature and Interpretation, University of Chicago, 1932). Contra, W. A. Irwin, "The Thinking of Amos," AJSL, Vol. XLIX (1932), No. 2, pp. 102-114.

³J. M. P. Smith, op. cit., p. 91.

Isaiah's idea while in certain respects is similar to achievement of the Greek mind, has a distinguishing difference. It was not so objective a perception. It was a reality which more definitely impinged upon and entered the inner life of man. It touched the springs of man's action. It was not something lying dormant in nature phenomena, but affected his life somewhat as a universal Will.

Only a word need be said about Isaiah's frequent designation of the deity, *קדוש שׁוֹרֵה*. It has been called an hypostasis of a divine characteristic, namely, holiness. Such an hypostasis was probably achieved in *קדוש* the female goddess of Syria. She represented the female principle, the mana-fertility power. But her power was not necessarily personal. In fact it seemed to be more impersonal in quality. But the *קדוש שׁוֹרֵה*, as Isaiah conceived it, was the mana-taboo force personalized. The phrase itself indicates a personal relationship between the Holy One and his people. It expresses a new attachment, a new attitude toward what was once regarded as an impersonal something but is now endowed with the attributes of being. Yahweh Sevaoth and holiness thus coalesced into a unity.

One must evaluate the eighth century prophets as thinkers of unusual capacity. Their social insight is a matter of constant remark among Biblical scholars. They have also been regarded as theologians. A fact which this study has been able in some measure to demonstrate is that they achieved a respectable religious philosophy by a thoroughly new conception of "holiness." The elements of that philosophy were present to a large extent in the culture pattern which they criticized. "Holiness," clearly or dimly conceived, was the warp upon which an elaborate cultus has been woven. The prophets transformed the idea of ethicizing it and by making ultimate and complete "holiness" equal to Yahweh himself. The totality represented by "holiness" now became personalized, and as it touched the life of man, it became, so to speak, a categorical imperative for moral action.

